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MONTHLY BULLETIN

PENNSYLVANIA·DEPARTMENT·OF·WELFARE

Vol. II, No. 9-10 HARRISBURG, PA., JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1934

NEW ACTS PROVIDE AID FOR BLIND AND AGED

PENNSYLVANIA'S welfare program took two strides forward on January 19th, when Governor Pinchot signed the bills passed in the last special session of the Legislature authorizing old age assistance and pensions for the blind.

These acts represent a notable advance in the provisions made by the State for care of its less fortunate citizens. Of major value is their recognition of the important principle of preserving an individual's self-respect by granting him financial assistance in caring for himself rather than by consigning him to existence in an institution.

Administration of both new funds is entrusted to the County Boards of Trustees of the Mothers' Assistance Fund, under supervision of the State Department of Welfare.

Any statement as to the number of citizens likely to be affected by these two pieces of Legislation must as yet be purely conjectural, but it is estimated that about 38,000 men and women will probably apply for old age assistance, and that approximately 4,000 blind persons will seek pensions. In both cases the maximum grant allowed is $30 a month.

Applicants for old age assistance must be past the age of seventy and must have been residents of Pennsylvania and citizens of the United States for fifteen years. The Board administering the fund must be satisfied that the applicant has no relatives who might be capable of assuming his support. If one member of a family receives a grant of $30 a month an additional eligible member of the same family may not obtain more than $15 a month. No payments will be made before December, 1934.

Blind persons seeking pensions must be 21 years old or more and must have lived in the State for at least ten years. They must be free from any physical or mental infirmity sufficient to make them a charge upon any other agency of the State. No application shall be approved until a certified opthalmologist or licensed oculist has examined the applicant and certified in writing as to his visual ability, which must be less than three-sixtieths of normal vision. The first pensions are to be paid in June.

Anticipated revenue from the sale of liquor in State stores is counted on to furnish the funds required by both these measures. Unemployment relief is, however, a prior obligation upon the State Stores Fund.

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C. W. A. WORKERS SPEED WELFARE PROJECTS

ALADDIN rubbed his lamp for the Department of Welfare when the Civil Works Administration made workers available for the Department's use. The last few months have been epochal in their constructive accomplishments—marked by the inauguration or completion of vast quantities of work long sorely needed but hitherto impossible of attainment because of the Department's limited budget.

Whatever may happen to the C.W.A. in the next few months, it has already left a permanent record of achievement in the Department of Welfare and the State institutions. More than 5,000 men and women have been employed on the nearly 300 Welfare Department projects approved by the State Administrator. In fact more than three per cent of the Federal C.W.A. funds allotted to Pennsylvania is being spent by the Department and its institutions.

And it is all being spent for useful, needed work—work of lasting value. The C.W.A. has stipulated that every project approved must be socially and economically worth while; and thus far not a single project for which the Welfare Department has filed application has been returned unapproved.

Projects range all the way from building pig pens in State institutions to making a comprehensive survey and analysis of Pennsylvania's intricate maze of 1,400 poor relief laws.

In this army of constructive workers the vast majority are laborers, engaged in making numerous improvements to the buildings and grounds of State institutions. But hundreds of white collar workers as well are taking part in the program. Six hundred and forty-seven engineers, architects, draftsmen, surveyors, etc., are making a complete physical survey of the 28 institutions—their buildings, grounds, roads, power plants and service lines. In all cases where detailed plans and drawings do not exist they are now being made. This information has long been badly needed and will be of tremendous value.

Shifting from the engineering field to the sociological, 100 workers are making a complete census report of children under care in Pennsylvania, in cooperation with the Federal Bureau of the Census and the U. S. Children's Bureau. The extensive individual information desired for every child deserted by its parents, supported by public funds, placed to board in a foster home, etc., would

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"Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief, doctor, lawyer, merchant chief"—the old singsong formula is called to mind by the Department of Welfare's list of workers on C. W. A. projects, which reads almost like a roll-call of all the trades and professions. The accompanying article tells something of the work they have been doing.

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EDITORIAL

By Alice F. Liveright, Secretary of Welfare

GOVERNOR PINCHOT'S ardent battle for social legislation was successful in the recent Special Session of the Legislature. Provision for the aged and the blind has now been made possible by acts passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor.

We may look upon the grants soon to become available as a recognition of the State's obligation to its citizens who through no fault of their own cannot maintain themselves. Inadequate income was formerly looked upon as an indication of personal failure. Is it not sufficiently tragic to lack the strength or the ability to be self-supporting, without an added stigma of grudging assistance meted out by critical neighbors serving as elected officials or by representatives of agencies inadequately financed?

Aged men and women who have given all their strength and energy—and probably their hard-earned savings—to the welfare of the families in their communities deserve the respect of all able-bodied citizens. No one with thought for his own parents would begrudge the use of State funds to improve the lot of these veterans.

It will now be possible for blind people to be assured of an income to relieve at least their most harassing worries concerning the fundamental essentials of life.

The Mothers' Assistance Fund in the Department of Welfare, with its scores of sterling Board members, will insure a just and considerate service to these two groups of Pennsylvanians. Slowly and thoroughly plans are being developed for these new services. Applications will be carefully considered, and before the year is over thousands of our citizens will look with gratitude to their courageous Governor, who with the cooperation of the Legislature has once more demonstrated his consideration for justice.

The entire personnel of the Department of Welfare was entertained at supper by Mrs. Liveright at the Department's annual party on December 18th. By a process of judicious squeezing all the workers were able to crowd into the Secretary's office for the dinner and the accompanying entertainment, which ranged all the way from a brief talk by the Secretary of Welfare to a cinema performance (not specifically connected with welfare subjects) by Mr. Mickey Mouse.

AID FOR BLIND AND AGED

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The amount available for old age assistance can not be determined in advance. This legislation makes no provision for additional administrative salaries and expenses in the Department of Welfare, but the Act appropriating $1,310,000 for pensions for the blind specifically allots $60,000 of that sum to the Department in the first year for this purpose.

The State Office of the Mothers' Assistance Fund anticipates that it will be necessary to add at least six new field workers and supervisors to its staff to handle these two new divisions of its work. A number of the county Boards of Trustees which have not hitherto been able to afford the full-time services of trained workers will be enabled to acquire them by these additional funds and functions. In counties not now organized under the Mothers' Assistance Fund Act special boards are to be appointed by the Governor to administer the funds.

ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION COMPARATIVELY NEW

It was the territory of Alaska which led the way for the United States in making provision for its elderly citizens. Alaska's old age pension law was adopted in 1915. Montana and Nevada set the pace for the states by passing similar laws in 1923. Since then many other states have followed their lead, with Pennsylvania now becoming the twenty-seventh in line. More than half the population of the United States is now giving some measure of public security to old people.

The rapid acceptance of this type of legislation in recent years has been based chiefly on two realizations: first, that the old-fashioned system of public poor relief, either in the home or in the almshouse, has been inadequate, demoralizing to its recipients, and costly to the taxpayer; and second, that with changing modes of life and movement from country to city, there are fewer and fewer family homes adequate in size or income to care for elderly relatives.

Old age assistance recommends itself on several grounds. It is comparatively simple to administer. It enables old people to stay in the locality where they have made friends and feel at home. It provides a more normal community life in that it does not drain off and segregate the aged. It does not affront the self-respect of those receiving assistance. And finally (and this is of particular appeal to the taxpayer) it has been found to be far more economical than any other form of aid. There are many persons who, if given a regular monthly allowance, can manage to live comfortably at less expense than they could in any almshouse or institutional home.

The incentives to making special relief provisions for the blind are in general similar to those motivating old age assistance. The pioneer in this field was Ohio, which passed its first blind relief law in 1898. Pennsylvania's recent action makes a total of 23 states which now recognize blindness as a sufficiently well-defined cause of poverty to be a special public responsibility.

An important feature of both new pieces of welfare legislation is that they center all financial responsibility in the State. In a number of other states the payment of pensions has been made permissive with County Commissioners, with the result that many counties have ignored the matter completely. But by Pennsylvania's new system county lines will make no difference in the granting of public aid to citizens who because of old age or blindness are genuinely in need.

C. W. A. WORKERS SPEED WELFARE PROJECTS

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have been impossible to obtain without the help of C.W.A. workers.

The classification of prisoners in State penal institutions that is necessary for the intelligent advancement of Pennsylvania's penal program is being undertaken by 34 persons—psychologists, stenographers, clerks and a social case worker. Only by this individual appraisal is it possible to determine the type of institution and training for which each prisoner is best fitted.

It is obviously impossible to give detailed information here about each of the hundreds of projects. Household economists and dieticians are making studies of food costs and consumption and of housekeeping programs in the institutions, while agriculturists are working on a system of farm products cost accounting. Legal authorities are surveying the poor laws, while sociologists contemplate making an intensive study of resources, manners, morals and customs of a stranded Pennsylvania community.

Librarians are cataloguing and indexing books in a State institution, a draftsman is making statistical charts and maps to illustrate the Department's work, an editor is revising the handbook of State institutions, a cinema projectionist ran the motion pictures displayed by the Department of Welfare at the Farm Show. Clerical workers are doing dozens of needful tasks: sorting and coding the census of mental hospitals and of prisons, tabulating criminal courts reports, summarizing relief in poor districts, classifying waiting lists of mental defectives and feeble-minded cases, cataloguing all welfare agencies in the State to aid in enforcement of the Solicitation of Funds Act, classifying case records of the blind and of applicants for relief, and doing various other jobs of revising, sorting, coding, transferring and analysing.

Among the most important of the projects undertaken at the institutions has been the installation of electric fire alarm systems—a safety measure required by the Department of Labor and Industry but hitherto held up by lack of funds. Other work at institutions includes: constructing and repairing highways; installing water lines; painting and renovating buildings inside and out; building fire escapes, filtration plants, sewage disposal plants, sheds, garages and bridges; laying tile floors; surveying property lines; grading, weatherstripping and many other projects.

Administration of this extensive C.W.A. program is in the hands of regular staff members. The Deputy Secretary is Civil Works Administrator for the Department, and in each institution the superintendent serves as local Administrator.

The greatest volume of work is being carried on at the Pennhurst State School, the Harrisburg State Hospital and the State Penitentiary at Rockview. Next come the Norristown State Hospital, the Selinsgrove State Colony for Epileptics and the State Industrial Home for Women at Muncy, employing in the last week of January more than 200 workers each. C.W.A. workers in lesser numbers are also to be found at nineteen other institutions.

Trades and Professions of C. W. A. Workers Employed on Projects in Department of Welfare and State Institutions, Week Ending January 25, 1934.

Type of Worker	*Number Employed*	*Type of Worker*	*Number Employed*	*Type of Worker*	*Number Employed*
Laborer	2865	Tree Pruner	7	Ornamental Iron Worker	2
Painter	256	Bookkeeper	6	Pipefitter	2
Carpenter	230	Sheetmetal Worker	6	Powder Man	2
Foreman	117	Axeman	5	Sawyer	2
Draftsman	87	Survey Chief	5	Superintendent	2
Engineer	84	Secretary	5	Tinner	2
Mason	83	Statistician	5	Welder	2
Plasterer	55	Tracer	5	Writer-Editor	2
Timekeeper	44	Material Man	4	Accountant	1
Clerk	43	Supervisor	4	Appraisal Engineer	1
Rodman	42	Appraiser	3	Auto Mechanic	1
Bricklayer	41	Bookkeeper-Typist	3	Barber	1
Chainman	38	Dynamite Man	3	Commercial Teacher	1
Electrician	36	Electrical Survey Assistant	3	Concrete Finisher	1
Plumber	36	Farm Economist	3	Filer	1
Skilled Laborer	34	Hoist Engineer	3	Fireman	1
Psychologist	29	Household Economist	3	Horticulturist	1
Research Worker	29	Instrument Man	3	Interior Decorator	1
Cement Finisher	24	Landscape Architect	3	Investigator	1
Truck Driver	19	Rock Driller	3	Lawyer	1
Watchman	19	Steam Shovel Operator	3	Music Instructor	1
Stenographer	18	Census Taker	2	Occupational Therapist	1
Surveyor	18	Chief of Staff	2	Rigger	1
Transitman	16	Copyist	2	Safety Man	1
Architect	14	Levelman	2	Saw Filer	1
Typist	12	Librarian	2	Sign Painter	1
Blacksmith	9	Lumber Checker	2	Sociologist	1
Mechanic	8	Map Draftsman	2	Stone Quarry Foreman	1
Steamfitter	8	Mechanical Survey Assistant	2	Tractor Operator	1
Caulker	7	Mortar Mixer	2	Tree Surgeon	1
Teamster	7	Nursing Consultant	2	Wellman	1
		Office Manager	2		

EMERGENCY CHILD CARE

SIX million children in families receiving public relief. Several million more children in families brought by unemployment to the verge of destitution. These figures are not sentimental guesswork, but reliable estimates by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

And it is because of them that workers for child welfare have met recently in Washington and Harrisburg to confer on "Present Emergencies in the Care of Dependent and Neglected Children."

The conference in Washington, called on December 16th by the United States Children's Bureau at the request of the Child Welfare League of America, was followed on January 12th and 13th by a meeting in Harrisburg to discuss Pennsylvania's plans for emergency care of children and to define the specific obligation of emergency relief administrations in safeguarding children's welfare.

The Secretary of Welfare, who presided at the Harrisburg conference, appointed a continuing committee to make plans for meeting new conditions caused by such factors as the curtailment of appropriations for public support of children and the great reduction in resources of private organizations. This committee includes:

Arthur Dunham of the Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, chairman; Edwin D. Solenberger, General Secretary, Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; Reverend Lester W. Bumpus, Executive Secretary, Baptist Orphanage and Home Society, Pittsburgh; Miss Dorothy C. Kahn, Director, Philadelphia County Relief Board; Miss Julia C. Branson, Executive Secretary Mothers' Assistance Fund of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh; Reverend Edward F. O'Malley, Catholic Children's Bureau, Philadelphia; Miss Margaret S. Moss, State Emergency Relief Board, Harrisburg; Mrs. Naomi B. Davies, Blossburg; Miss M. Luella Sauer, Executive Secretary, Council of Catholic Charities, Pittsburgh; and J. Prentice Murphy, Executive Secretary, Children's Bureau of Philadelphia.

AFTER THE FARM SHOW

MOTION pictures, marionettes, music, tableaux and three-minute speeches all played a part in visualizing the Department of Welfare's work and program for visitors to the State Farm Show at Harrisburg in January.

It is estimated that at least 7,500 people were included in the audiences at the Department's continuous "free shows" throughout the week. Among the features were motion pictures showing the training and uses of guide dogs for the blind and the processes of child placement, together with films portraying the work done at Allentown and Warren State Hospitals and Polk State School. Dr. H. B. Gaynor of the Polk staff gave a running commentary on the pictures from his institution. Special events were presented by pupils of Pennhurst State School and staff members of the State Industrial Home for Women at Muncy.

The Muncy tableaux were an illuminating revelation of the life and training of a woman inmate of this modern penal institution from her arrival and initial physical, mental and psychological examination until the time when, upon parole, she is ready to make a fresh start in the world. Brief but effective scenes illustrated the training given in household and laundry work, in primary, intermediate and business school, in music and gymnastics, in club work, in sewing, art and domestic science, in dairying and poultry care, in garden, cannery and storeroom.

The Pennhurst program included a harmonica band and dancing and singing numbers by boys and girls of the school under the direction of Dr. W. R. Krauss, superintendent.

The Prison Labor Division's display of nursery planting from the State Penitentiary at Rockview and the sale of toys made by the Occupational Therapy Department of the Harrisburg State Hospital were other popular features of the Department's booth at the Show.

R. Bruce Dunlap, Director of the Bureau of Institutional Management, served as chairman of the Farm Show Committee with his usual efficiency.

STATE CONFERENCE TO MEET AT LANCASTER

BOARD members, staff workers—all persons interested in social welfare in Pennsylvania—are invited to the Pennsylvania Conference on Social Welfare, to be held at the Hotel Brunswick, Lancaster, February 21st to 24th.

The timely question: "Is Pennsylvania Now Ready for County Welfare Boards to Administer Public Welfare?" will be discussed at the Saturday morning forum by Arthur Dunham of the Public Charities Association of Pennsylvania and Speaker Grover C. Talbot of the House of Representatives. The Thursday morning forum, dealing with the minimum wage, will be led by Miss Charlotte Carr, Secretary of Labor and Industry; and that on Friday, discussing the part to be played by private agencies in an age of increasing emphasis on public welfare control, by Elwood Street, Director of the Washington, D. C., Community Chest.

Among other outstanding speakers and their topics will be Eric Biddle, Director of the S.E.R.B. and the C.W.A., "Unemployment Relief—the State's Program;" H. L. Lurie, Director Bureau of Jewish Social Research, N. Y., "Mental Hygiene and Unemployment Relief;" and Mrs. Alice F. Liveright, Secretary of Welfare, "Is Government Responsible for Social Welfare?"

Judge Paul N. Schaeffer of Reading, member of the State Welfare Commission, will preside at the dinner meeting sponsored by the Department of Welfare on Friday evening, the 23rd. The general topic will be case work in the public welfare field, with Dr. Paul Holmer discussing it from the viewpoint of the Bureau of Mental Health; Mrs. Helen Glenn Tyson from that of the Bureau of Community Work; and Howard B. Gill, Superintendent of the State Prison Colony at Norfolk, Mass., telling of case work in the modern penitentiary.

Of particular importance is the Conference program of four-day Institutes for social workers, board members, public officials and others interested in community welfare. Eighteen different courses are offered—four of them being designed especially for County Emergency Relief Board workers. Three members of the Welfare Department staff will lead Institutes.

Inquiries regarding these courses should be addressed to the chairman of the Institutes Committee, Mrs. Mary Clarke Burnett, 620 Investment Building, Pittsburgh.